

Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee

Neighborhood Plan Updates SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

(6/23/09)

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING(S), TOPICS AND ATTENDEES

The Neighborhood Plan Updates Subcommittee met on 5/14, 6/8, and 6/23/09 to discuss General Philosophy for Neighborhood Plan Updates and topics that the Subcommittee recommends be included in the Neighborhood Plan Updates documents. In attendance

5/14: Coney (Chair.), Edwards, Meeks, Thaler, Ramirez, Baily, Martin; joined by Oien (Validation), Paschal (Alt), and Goldberg (DPD);

6/8: Coney, Meeks, joined by Knapton (Validation), Boaz Ashkenazy (Validation) Benjamin (Alt Ballard), Roewe (Planning Commissioner), Joshua Curtis (Great City);

6/23: Coney, Edwards, Meeks, Bailey, joined by Knapton (Validation), Saxman (Validation), Benjamin (Alt. Ballard), and Lyle Bicknell (DPD.)

SUMMARY OF SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION

5/14: At our organizational meeting we agreed that the Updates Report on topics recommended for inclusion in Neighborhood Plan Updates should be limited to and categorized under the headings agreed to by the Validation Committee. The Subcommittee discussed the general philosophy of Seattle's neighborhood planning to date and what topics might flow from district and city-wide changes and adopted City Plans. A draft report was reviewed and modified.

6/8: The Subcommittee heard a presentation on the principals and local realities of incentive zoning and how some Neighborhood Planning Areas could further empower their neighborhood plans through the application of incentive zoning to commercial redevelopment. The subcommittee discussed how incentive zoning could be crafted to benefit some urban villages and centers. The draft report was reviewed. Further topics were discussed for the subcommittee report on General Philosophy and Neighborhood Plan Updates documents topics.

6:23: Final input was received from subcommittee members on all items in the draft report. Lyle Bicknell counseled the subcommittee on how to phrase recommendations. All present accepted the report as modified. Oien and Bailey filed refined, but not substantively changed, language for their input by e-mail subsequent to the meeting.

At the request of the NPAC Co-Chairs and the NPAC Members the subcommittee reviewed a draft letter to Mayor and City Councilmembers making the case for more substantial funding in the next biennium for the neighborhood planning process. The draft was agreed to. Subsequently a longer draft with the same content that also takes into account actions by the Planning Commission was submitted and accepted by the subcommittee by e-mail.

DISCUSSION ITEMS FOR NPAC

- Incentive Zoning as it may or may not apply to Seattle's urban villages and urban centers
- LEED ND as a way of including sustainability items in Neighborhood Plan Update documents
- Funding letter to Mayor and Council

ACTIONS/DECISIONS/DIRECTION NEEDED FROM NPAC

- Adoption of the subcommittee's Report
- Adoption of the draft funding letter

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DETAIL: ATTACHMENTS A AND B

Attachment A: Draft Report by the Subcommittee on Neighborhood Plan Updates

npac updates subcommittee updates & ltr report

6/23/09 DRAFT REPORT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS UPDATES SUBCOMMITTEE ON
PHILOSOPHY AND TOPICS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATES

The Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (NPAC) offers the following points of general philosophy for review and revision of Seattle's Neighborhood Plans:

GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

- Every neighborhood reflected in the existing Neighborhood Plans is different with a particular history, culture mix, physical assets, community services, public realm feature.
- Each neighborhood has unique demographics, existing growth targets, a mix of market rate and subsidized housing, and under-utilized land.
- Revised Neighborhood Plans should include an inventory of the neighborhood's existing physical assets and needed assets accompanied by recommendations on which assets to save/conservate, which to replace, which to add.
- Each Neighborhood Plan may contain the City's revised growth targets.
- Each Neighborhood Plan should contain revised Goals, Policies, and Strategies for achieving the goals related to livability, sustainability, walkability, health, education, reducing car dependency, economic vitality, job creation.
- All Neighborhood Plans should contain an updated neighborhood history section, so it is known what has changed for that set of neighborhoods.
- Neighborhoods with plans that accept new population and job spaces should prioritize needed urban infrastructure, public facilities, public services that relate to serving additional population.
- All Neighborhoods should have funding to utilize professionals in revising their plans, creating/revising Neighborhood Design Guidelines, Streetscape Plans, etc.
- Provide elements in the Neighborhood Plan or call for subsequent planning that empowers the Sector's Design Review Boards to improve the appearance, ambience, and vibrancy of the neighborhood: neighborhood-based recommendations for neighborhood-based design guidelines, streetscape plans, public art plans.
- A neighborhood plan could request prioritized goals for Incentive Zoning where appropriate.
- Maximize the opportunity for station areas and/or transit hubs where appropriate to be as complete as possible with a diversity of uses/businesses, services, housing types. The station area developments could encourage diverse housing and businesses that serve a population with diverse cultures, incomes, and age categories.
- The Neighborhood Plans and Plan Updates should be web-based and accessible to the communities. They should contain important links to other sources of neighborhood information (like Design Guidelines, etc.)
- A plan for all community stakeholders to access neighborhood plans on-line or on hard copy at Seattle Public Libraries should be developed.
- Common planning issues between adjacent urban villages and urban centers should be addressed. Neighborhood plans should address inter-urban village opportunities for mutual support.

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LAND USE

NPAC recommends that the Neighborhood Plan stakeholders consider the potential for Incentive Zoning to empower their Neighborhood Plan. Where it is appropriate for a particular Neighborhood Planning Area:

- a) Consider and prioritize elements for which incentives might be granted;**
- b) Evaluate possible height increases; and**
- c) Suggest urban design considerations that could be addressed in neighborhood design guidelines and or streetscape plans. Some examples:**

- Utilization of Incentive Zoning to encourage developers to reduce the street level footprint of structures, provide public open space.
- Utilization of Incentive Zoning to encourage developers to offer lower rents to established or new, locally-owned businesses that employ neighborhood residents.
- Future development of Neighborhood Design Guidelines to aid the sector's Design Review Board in making new building development more appropriate to the neighborhood character areas.
- New spaces for new public facilities by proposing appropriate incentive zoning incentives that allows additional building height or volume in exchange for public facility space(s).
- Public safety design features and design strategies:

Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in all new construction. This should include lighting for streets, public buildings, and land use spaces. • Recommend establishment of a Land Use Committee comprised of representatives from Neighborhood Plan stewardship groups.

TRANSPORTATION

In Seattle there is an emphasis on integrating mass transit and using the Transit Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, and Bicycle Master Plan as springboards for more detailed recommendations to increase transit use and alternatives to the car. Based on this major change in planning emphasis, NPAC recommends that Neighborhood Plan stakeholders review transportation elements of their Neighborhood Plan for consistency with the growing body of policy and plans to enhance alternatives to auto use. Review the relevant recommended improvements in the recently complete master plans, establish neighborhood priorities; and add specificity and/or needed neighborhood guidance on priorities. Where significant new transit investments are planned, they should consider transportation within the context of integrating land use and transportation. Stakeholders for Neighborhood Plans without significant transportation elements should consider adding those elements to their plan.

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Considerations for revision of Neighborhood Plans for urban villages:

- Elements in an urban village or urban center that are complementary to less dense parts of the neighborhood beyond the urban village or center boundary.
- Evaluation of bike/pedestrian routes that extend the quarter-mile non-motorized access to the transit station(s)
- Drop-off facilities at station
- Bike storage/maintenance at station
- Directional signage for bike/pedestrian routes
- Evaluation of mass transit and bus connections to other key urban villages and urban centers
- Review neighborhood bike/pedestrian facilities/routes for conformity with Seattle Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans
- Evaluation of needs for bike/pedestrian connections to key trail system components
- Evaluation of need for a designated transit hub in the urban village or urban center
- Evaluation of bus stop locations, bus shelter needs.
- Electrification of transit
- Parking needs for local businesses.
- Development of Neighborhood Streetscape Plans for pedestrian overlay zones.
- Evaluation of pedestrian safety and pedestrian level of service for crossings at key urban village/urban center intersections.
- Recommendations for improved safety features and aesthetic appearance of key crosswalks.
- Replacement of sidewalks by all permitted development and redevelopment projects.

HOUSING

Consider types of housing needed in different parts of a particular Neighborhood Planning area.

- Development of strategies such as Neighborhood Design Guidelines that encourage integration of mixed income housing units into market rate residential projects.
- Development of Neighborhood Design Guidelines that, if appropriate, encourage townhouse redevelopment projects that are appropriate to the particular neighborhood's single-family zoned areas. Evaluation of need for additional dwelling units on single-family zoned lots.

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CAPITAL FACILITIES

In a Neighborhood Plan Revision consider an inventory of public, capital facilities and prioritize additional facilities needed to be concurrent with increased density.

- Parks
- Libraries
- Public K-12 Schools
- Higher Education/Job Training Facilities
- Fire/Emergency Services Sites
- Recreation Centers
- Service Centers
- Health Services
- Senior Centers
- Human Service Centers
- Community Centers
- Community meeting spaces
- Swimming Pool

UTILITIES

In a Neighborhood Plan Revision consider improvements to public utility installations that could contribute to the livability of the neighborhood planning area.

- Consider placing new or renovated public power substations underground or co-located with public facilities or housing.
- Designation of pedestrian walkways for pedestrian lighting, bus stop lighting
- Reduction of unsightly pole-located transformers adjacent to public open spaces

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Neighborhood Plans can encourage retention and development of businesses in the neighborhood planning area by recommending strategies such as:

- Develop new organizational and financial capacity within the community to stimulate economic development
- Increase job creation and employment opportunities for business and/or economic corridors for residents.
- Encourage local ownership of redevelopment properties in communities.
- Coordination of information/marketing strategy for small and locally owned Business. Coordinate the efforts of community and business associations to develop a information and marketing strategy that will promote community businesses.
- Encourage opportunities for residents to live/ work in their communities.
- Develop public/private partnerships for job creation. This issue of job creation is best addressed through the expansion of existing businesses and the creation of new ones.
- Consider Business Improvement District or other business association models where appropriate.
- Encourage preservation of locally owned businesses.

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Neighborhood Plan Revisions can call for consideration of human development through strategies such as:

- Develop a relevant and broad spectrum of job skill training programs.
- Develop and maintain accessible technology infrastructure. Ensure access to the information highway, with the creation of community based community/technology centers.
- Broaden educational scope of public safety to include health, social, and environmental concerns.
- Partner with School District to develop relevant curriculum, policies, services and programs which could also include the community's, social, cultural, economic and real life issues and needs. Encourage and work with Seattle School District administration and operation to integrate, create and expand collaborations and partnerships with communities.
- Expand community employment/job training partnerships with workforce development organizations, Seattle Public Schools and institutions of higher learning.
- Develop and encourage community services learning program throughout the educational spectrum from public and private schools as well as institutions of higher learning.
- Develop and enforce collaboration and mutually supportive organizational structure and policies within and between health & human service agencies.
- Encourage neighborhood locations and space availability for educational activities:
 - Public Schools K-12
 - Community College space
 - Job re-training space
 - Higher education sub-campus space and distance learning facilities
 - Computer/internet access centers
 - Health care/wellness facilities
 - Life-long learning courses
 - Assessment and improvements to public safety

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Neighborhood Plan Revisions can encourage retention and development of cultural activities by strategies such as:

- Improve/construct Rec. Centers
- Improve/construct children's play facilities, other park facilities.
- Specify that live/work units suitable for artist lofts be among preferred residential unit types – an element in a Neighborhood Design Guidelines proposal.
- Provide for historic preservation recommendations for appropriate structures or for a contiguous character area.
- Provide for a public art program with a suitable neighborhood arts organization.
- Develop recommendations for a Neighborhood Design Guidelines document that encourage appropriate public art for the neighborhood in new development projects.
- Consider designation of an Arts Zone Overlay District.
- Conversion of vacated public school facilities for community uses

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ENVIRONMENT

Neighborhood Plan Revisions can address Environmental Health and Social Issues by strategies such as:

- Recommend adoption of Incentive Zoning to encourage developers to provide public open spaces at street level, view corridors, improved streetscapes.
- Identify sites that are not practical for development in the future that can be acquired for public open space, recreation, pea-patch farming, bike station, etc.
- Specify preference for appropriate sustainable design standards in new construction, such as Living Building Challenge, LEED, etc.
- While drafting the neighborhood plans, consider large-scale sustainability concepts and Smart Growth principles.
- Consider using the “LEED for Neighborhood Development” checklist as a guide in order to cover the full range of possible sustainability issues.
- Consider opportunities for local food production.
- Consider opportunities for encouraging compact development, prioritizing brownfield redevelopment, and reducing parking footprints.
- Investigate opportunities for “low impact development” (LID), creek daylighting, and other natural stormwater management in new street improvement and large development plans.
- Investigate opportunities for partnerships to build energy-efficient district heating and cooling (shared among several buildings) or renewable energy.
- Investigate opportunities for creation or restoration of wildlife habitat.

(NPAC Neighborhood Plans Updates Subcommittee will consider LEED NP standards in later meetings.)

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Attachment B: Draft Letter to Mayor and City Councilmembers regarding substantial funding for the Neighborhood Planning Process in the next biennium

Npac funding ltr

DRAFT 6/25/09 (NPAC letter to Mayor, City Councilmembers)

We are writing you to express NPAC's concerns regarding upcoming funding levels for Seattle's Neighborhood Plan update/status report process. NPAC was formed to provide the Mayor and the City Council advice on how best to execute the review and revision of the ten-year old adopted Neighborhood Plans. As citizen volunteers serving on NPAC, we are dedicated to keeping Seattle's Neighborhood Plans alive and current.

We have worked closely with the dedicated staff at the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and the Department of Neighborhoods. Recently, along with the Seattle Planning Commission, NPAC co-hosted a series of Sector Open House meetings designed to stimulate a neighborhood-based conversation about the status of the Neighborhood Plans. We engaged in a facilitated conversation with neighborhood residents and stakeholders, asking them to think seriously about how Neighborhood Plans are shaping their communities, what is working, what is not, what positive changes have occurred and what is still to be accomplished. Over the next several months we will continue these neighborhood-based conversations. As we and the City continue community outreach efforts, public expectations regarding continued support for updating the 10-year old Neighborhood plans will rise.

From our experience so far--and the experience of the many people involved over the last decade in neighborhood planning--we are convinced that this round of Neighborhood Planning deserves funding commensurate with the expectations created by the current Neighborhood Plan update and status report process. Please note that ordinance (122799) states: "Whereas, while City resources are limited, the City Council has identified funding for neighborhood planning updates as one of the Council's top five priorities for the 2009-10 budget,..."

Public support for planning-based initiatives underscores the importance of continued funding for Neighborhood Planning. Without question, the key to successful funding for initiatives and levies for parks, transportation,

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libraries, and fire protection is directly linked to public support for Neighborhood Planning; without robust, widely supported planning, the levies would not have been so widely supported. Likewise, the key to public acceptance of the Neighborhood Plans was the public validation process.

While we realize the City faces enormous budget challenges in the coming years, we respectfully request Neighborhood Planning remain a long-term priority. Lack of adequate funding in the coming biennium will jeopardize the revision, updating and public validation of Neighborhood Plans. This will create impacts felt for many years. The City, through NPAC and the update and status report process, is laying the groundwork for improvements in our urban villages that will assure Seattle's economic success in the 21st century. Public acceptance of viable Neighborhood Plans and the means to fund implementation of those plans is essential to the fulfillment of our urban village goals.

Added to this, the City must not squander the goodwill and work accomplished by NPAC and the Planning Commission. Many dedicated volunteers and City staff have spent countless hours working on these plans, updates and status reports. If the City walks away now, it will squander this hard work and goodwill, thereby feeding another decade of distrust by neighborhood stakeholders. Failure to adequately fund the current Neighborhood Planning process will support the claims that the process is a sham, wasting the time of the neighborhood stakeholders and imposing unilateral requirements on their communities.

We hope that in this time of budgetary constraints, you will be able to increase funding for the Neighborhood Planning process that we are dedicated to moving forward.

Sincerely

Co-Chair. NPAC

Co-Chair. NPAC